Butler-McCook House Education Programs
Central Office-Amos Bull House
59 S. Prospect St.
Hartford, CT 06106
860.247.8996 x 10
Hours: 9 am- 5 pm

The McCook Family in Victorian Hartford Tour

Travel back in time to see how life in Hartford has changed over the past 100 years. Meet members of the McCook family and learn how the city of Hartford evolved over the nearly 200 years the family lived on Main Street. Students will use music, manners and art to compare and contrast how growing up in the late 1800s differs from a child's life today.

Workshops to Compliment the Tour

Meet Mippie. An Introduction to Primary Sources. How did people stay in touch before e-mail? Students discuss different types of primary sources, including letters, photographs, and interviews. They then analyze a letter that Eliza (Mippie) McCook wrote to her aunt and use it to learn more about the McCooks' lives.

Laundry Day. Using Objects to Learn about Servants Lives. No washing machine, no problem! Students learn how to read an artifact from the past through a hands-on exploration of a washboard, an unfamiliar object to today's children. This activity also introduces students to life as a household servant in 19th-century Hartford.
Tour Length: 45 minutes
Workshop Length: 45 minutes
Grade Level: 3-6
Paths to Change.  A joint program with the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center.  
Visit the historic houses of Harriet Beecher Stowe and the Reverend John James McCook and watch your students engage in history. Paths to Change introduces students to two Hartford social reformers and encourages them to expand their viewpoints on two of the largest social issues of the 19th century: slavery and homelessness. Students compare and contrast the paths that these two individuals used to make changes in their own communities: Stowe advocating for the end of slavery and McCook studying and working to help the homeless.

Program includes a comprehensive teacher’s guide, pre-visit classroom activities, and a post-visit essay activity that fit into the CMT and CAPT standards (persuasive and expository essays).

The program is free to Hartford public school students; the cost for non-Hartford students is $10. 1 chaperone is free for every 10 students; additional chaperones $7 each. Tour Length: 3 hours [includes 60 minute tour of McCook and Stowe houses, travel time, and lunch (not provided)].
Grade Level: 4-12

Walking Tours

I Spy Main Street!  Children experience the history of Main Street while searching for architectural features to complete their I Spy worksheets. The tour focuses on the different types of structures found on Main Street, including churches, businesses, government buildings, and museums, dating from the 17th century to present-day.

Southside Architecture Scavenger Hunt.  During the 19th century, the Southside of Main Street became a fashionable neighborhood and home to vital industrial businesses. Students learn about the people who lived in this neighborhood and the different immigrant groups that moved to Hartford. Participants receive an introduction to architectural styles and identify building styles using an architectural scavenger hunt worksheet.

Exploring Bushnell Park.  Completed in 1864, Bushnell Park was the first American park built and paid for by a city’s citizens. It continues to be a place of natural beauty. The tour explores the history of some of the park’s major elements, including the Soldier and Sailor’s Arch and the Corning Fountain. Participants design their own postcards, based on historic images. Tour lengths: Approximately 1-1½ hours.
Grade Level: 3-12

Hands-on History Activities

Complement your house or walking tour with one of the following activities. All activities appropriate for grades 3-6.
**Portrait Perusal:** How did people create pictures before cameras? After viewing the McCooks' portraits, children create their own self-portrait. 
Activity Length: 30-45 minutes.

**Signs, Signs, Everywhere Signs.** How did people advertise before billboards and television? Children examine historic trade signs and make their own sign for their dream modern job. 
Activity length: 30-45 minutes.

**The Blizzard of 1888.** Children learn about the storm that covered Hartford with more than three feet of snow and created twenty-five foot tall snow drifts! Participants make their own Winter Wonderland Scenes to hang in their windows at home. 
Activity length: 45-60 minutes

**Parades and Battle Flags.** Why do we have parades? What types of parades did the McCooks see marching down Main Street? Learn about parades, including Battle Flag Day, and create your very own Civil War battle flag. 
Activity length: 45-60 minutes

**Drawing in the Garden.** Come and discover the beauty of the 19th-century garden at the Butler-McCook House. Children draw their favorite flowers and plants and frame their artwork. Seasonal. 
Activity length: 30-45 minutes.

**Decorating for the Holidays.** Celebrate the holiday season by touring the decorated Butler-McCook House! Make ornaments similar to the ones owned by the McCook family. Seasonal. 
Tour and Activity length: 45-60 minutes

**Create a Cityscape.** Students create their own version of the Hartford cityscape. Participants choose an image of one of the historic buildings to paint. Offered in conjunction with the walking tours. 
Activity length: 30-45 minutes

**Where in time are we?** Become a time traveler and uncover important events from Hartford history. Students tour the permanent exhibition in the Main Street History Center and complete timelines. 
Activity length: 30-45 minutes.